DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 145 841 IR 005 296

TITLE EURONET: Guidelines for Cooperation between Data Base Suppliers and Host Organizations.

INSTITUTION Commission des Communautes Europeennes (Luxembourg). Bureau de Terminologie.

PUB DATE Jun 77

NOTE 11p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS Contracts; *Data Bases; Guidelines; *Information Systems; Interagency Cooperation; Purchasing

IDENTIFIERS *EURONET

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the guidelines is to focus on the mutual benefits which arise from close cooperation between Data Base Suppliers (DBS) and Hosts, and to identify some of the individual responsibilities. The guidelines have been assembled from accepted policies and procedures in information supply activities to assist EURONET Hosts and DBS to work effectively in serving information users in the European Community. The beginning of a relationship between a Host and DBS is definition of the data base in terms of content, format, software, updating, and changes. Any agreement between the Host and DBS must describe the services to be derived from the data base. DBS services, such as installation and operation, user support, and marketing assistance, should be outlined. Conditions of use of the system and responsibilities of the Host to the DBS include: restrictions on reproduction, termination, liability, evaluation of film content, proprietary rights. The guidelines outline policies on charges and fees. (Author/JAB)

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ED145841

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EURONET

Guidelines for cooperation between data base suppliers and host organizations

Prepared by ICSU AB
for the
Commission of the European Communities

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Directorate General
Scientific and Technical Information
and Information Management
Bâtiment Jean Monnet - Kirchberg
Luxembourg

June 1977 Edition

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Catalogue number: CK-22-77-427-EN-C.

I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Guidelines is to focus on the mutual benefits which arise from close co-operation between Data Base Suppliers (DBS) and Hosts, and to identify some of the individual responsibilities. They have been assembled from generally accepted policies and procedures in information supply activities to assist EURONET Hosts and DBS to work effectively in serving information users in the Community. Fruitful cooperation among DBS and Hosts relies not only upon the understanding of the Guidelines, but also upon the good faith of each in its concerns for the interests of those with whom it works.

The Guidelines supplement the individual bilateral agreements between DBS and Hosts to provide an overall working framework, and provide an opportunity for the development of greater consistency in agreements between them.

It is understood that these activities in the European Community are to be in conformity with the rules of the Treaty of Rome.

The willingness and cooperation of Hosts and DBS are an essential ingredient to the successful achievement of EURONET.

II. GUIDELINES

1. Definition of Data Base

A Data Base is considered to be an organized collection of machine-readable records containing one or more of the following: bibliographic descriptions, subject-oriented information, dictionary content, data (e.g., numerical or textual information).

An essential starting point in any relationship between a DBS and a Host organization is to define unambiguously the Data Base which forms the subject of any agreement.

The following items indicate the type of elements to be defined, whenever appropriate.

This list is not intended to be comprehensive and special cases will require additional items and/or adaptation of some of the points listed.

1.1. *Content — History and present status*

— Number of records in the Data Base for each type of content.

— Origin of sources by country.

— Time period covered.

— Specification of all types of data elements forming each record.

1.2. *Content — Policy*

— Scope of subject coverage.

— Type of sources covered (reports, periodicals, books, patents, theses, maps, etc.).

— Indexing techniques, methods of data evaluation, etc.

— Rules used for data element content (for example identification of authors, translating, transliterating, etc., of titles).

The above list is not intended to be comprehensive and special cases will require additional items and/or adaptation of some of the points listed.

1.3. *Format*

— File structure and format (record length, identifiers, etc.).

— Record structure and format.

— Tape density, character set and coding, etc.

1.4. *Software*

— Availability and description of software.

1.5. *Updating*

— Frequency and volume of updates.

— Assurance of best efforts for continuity and quality of service.

1.6. *Changes*

— Procedure for changes in format and/or content.

2. Definition of derivable services

Any agreement reached between the DBS and Host must describe the services which may be derived from the defined Data Base and their output form.

2.1. *Services*

Among the services to be considered are:

2.1.1. Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI)

The provision of current awareness services by the matching of an interest profile against current computer readable files. These interest profiles may be designed to serve:

(a) individuals;

(b) small groups with complementary interests;

(c) larger audience (standard profile).

SDI services are usually provided in batch mode.

2.1.2. Retrospective Searching

The matching of a query against a retrospective file (i.e. a file going back in time). The searcher usually has the option of defining the period of time over which the search will be made.

2.1.3. Re-publication

Re-publication of multiple copies from single machine readable searches, usually in the form of bibliographies.

2.2. *Output Forms*

Computer output generally takes one of four forms which may be subject to certain restrictions:

2.2.1. Computer Printout

2.2.2. Video Display

2.2.3. Machine readable form

2.2.4. Microforms

3. Data Base Suppliers' support to Host

Agreements should provide for DBS assistance to the Host both in the establishment and in the continuing operation of services.

Among such areas of support of the Host are:

3.1. *Installation and operation*

3.1.1. Availability of tapes and appropriate documentation to enable the Host to undertake Data Base evaluation, service implementation and ongoing operation.

3.1.2. Availability of detailed manuals on file format and content.

3.1.3. Availability of personnel to conduct training of Host personnel.

3.1.4. Arrangement of meetings with Host when complex problems arise.

3.2. *User Support*

3.2.1. Availability of detailed information to enable the Host to prepare user manuals.

3.2.2. Availability of personnel and documentation for user training.

3.3. *Marketing*

When marketing its products, the DBS generally draws attention to the full range of Hosts offering services from its Data Base.

4. Conditions of use

To protect both parties it is essential to reach agreements on the conditions of use.

Some conditions are:

4.1. *Operating location*

Agreements will be reached on each location at which the file and any derivative thereof may be used by the Host.

4.2. *Restrictions on reproduction*

— Hosts are usually restricted from copying or recording in part or in whole computer readable files for delivery to third parties.

— Reproduction of output from the Data Base must be the subject of separate agreements.

4.3. *Derived publications*

Possibilities for generating and distributing derived publications such as selected bibliographies must be clearly defined and agreed.

4.4. *Copyright*

Many of the Data Base Suppliers require a copyright notice to be displayed on all output derived from the file.

4.5. *Termination*

In the event of termination of an agreement between a DBS and a Host it is generally the practice of the DBS to require that the Host eliminate all copies of the file and derived content thereof from its holdings.

4.6. *Liability*

Although the DBS will make every effort to avoid data errors in the file, no liability can be accepted for any loss or damage to any person caused as a result of the use of the file or reliance on the information therein contained.

5. Host responsibilities

In order to ensure efficiency and service to the user, certain responsibilities are incumbent upon the Host with regard to the DBS. These responsibilities and interaction between the Host and DBS should be built into any agreement.

This should include:

5.1. *Identification of difficulties, errors and problems*

Help in maintaining the integrity of the Data Base through identification and prompt reporting by the Host of difficulties, errors and problems.

5.2. *Evaluation of file content*

Periodic evaluation of file content from the users' point of view assembled and transmitted by the Host to the DBS. However other uses of such evaluation should be decided jointly.

5.3. *Usage statistics*

Statistics on the overall usage and use per user of the file should be provided by the Host to the DBS, together with other operating data available to the Host. Detailed statistics must be treated confidentially by both parties in order to protect the user's interest.

5.4. *Material*

Modification to the materials supplied by the DBS should not be undertaken by the Host except with the approval of the DBS. It is further in the best interests of the Host to seek clearance of any additional material created by the Host relating to the services of the DBS.

5.5. *User Meetings*

DBS should be given the opportunity to attend meetings of users arranged by Hosts.

5.6. *Use of the File*

Hosts and DBS should consult on the optimal use of the file in the best interests of the user.

5.7. *Proprietary Rights*

Hosts should in conjunction with the DBS exercise their best efforts to safeguard the proprietary rights of DBS.

5.8. *Marketing*

In accordance with the principles of EURONET operation the Hosts should exercise their best efforts to promote the services of the DBS on an equitable basis with the other services they offer.

6. Charges

6.1. *Tariff Components*

There may be several components of a tariff. The most frequently used are:

6.1.1. Periodic fees, usually annual, may sometimes be the only charge levied by the DBS. More usually the periodic fee is regarded as a base charge to which use charges and others are added.

6.1.2. Use charges may take a number of forms, sometimes applied in combination. Among those currently used are:

— Connect hour charge;

— Hit charge;

— Percentage of income per search;

— Set fee per query irrespective of time or volume;

— Percentage of hits related to the overall file size.

6.1.3. Handling charges: an agreement may require the Host to take the responsibility for handling charges and for the cost of tape reels, shipping, etc.

6.1.4. Other charges: there may be other charges such as replication charges, for preparation or use of multiple copies but these are usually the subject of separate agreements.

6.2. *Tariff changes*

6.2.1. Where a periodic fee is applied, this and other charges should remain constant for the corresponding period.

6.2.2. When tariff changes become necessary, a minimum period of notification, at least 90 days, should be given to Hosts by DBS.

6.2.3. The algorithm or algorithms by which tariffs are calculated should remain constant for reasonably long periods of time in order to avoid uncertainty and disruption to Host and user budgeting. The algorithm(s) should not be changed during the time covered by the periodic fee.